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# UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS OF BUSINESS AND THE TRAINING OF EMPLOYMENT EXECUTIVES<sup>1</sup>

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It should be clearly understood that what I have to submit for your consideration cannot, in the nature of the case, be a description of what has been accomplished in university schools of business administration for the training of employment executives. Courses designed specifically as training for the employment executive function are being conducted for the first time during the present academic year. There is no experience behind us. The most we can do at the present moment is to consider what form we believe such training should take, as a result of our knowledge of the functions of the employment executive, and of the qualifications necessary for the performance of such functions.

The expression "University Schools of Business and the Training of Employment Executives" involves three elements, each of which should be clearly understood as a condition precedent to fruitful discussion. Of the concept *university schools of business* we have a common understanding and no definition is necessary. The word *training* and the words *employment executives*, however, may not mean the same thing to all of us. Some understand training with respect to a given objective to consist merely of imparting in the classroom information concerning that objective. By training I mean the whole complex of educational processes, those in the classroom and those outside the classroom, but more or less under the control of educational authorities, whose purpose is, in addition to the imparting of information, the wise selection of those who shall be trained for the specific purpose; the development of natural, temperamental and other personal characteristics; the development of capacity for independent investigation and thinking, for forming sound judgments, and for constructive imag-

<sup>1</sup> Read before Employment Managers' Conference, Minneapolis, January 20, 1916.

ination; and the development of a capacity for prompt adaptation to the environment in which is to be performed the service for which the training is designed. Training for the employment executive function is therefore something larger than the imparting of information concerning the work of the employment manager. Likewise with respect to the term *employment executive*. There are employment managers and employment managers. At one end of the line we find the subordinate clerk who merely hires and fires; at the other end of the line we find the employment manager who is coördinate in rank and authority with the works, the sales, and the financial managers; who is responsible for all administrative and executive work pertaining to the personnel; whose relations are with work-people as human beings rather than as a commodity; who is representative of the work-people to the management, and of the management to the work-people; who is the man of superior insight into the future of industrial human relations, and the leader and teacher who raises both parties to the industrial contract to higher conceptions of their mutual rights and obligations. It is the training of employment executives of this latter type that I propose to discuss.

The functions of an executive position determine the qualifications which may be demanded of him who is to fill it, and these qualifications determine the nature of the training for that position. Therefore our first inquiry is concerning the *functions* of the highest type of employment executive; our second inquiry is concerning the *qualifications* demanded by those functions; and our third inquiry is concerning the necessary *training* to develop those qualifications.

#### FUNCTIONS OF THE EMPLOYMENT EXECUTIVE

The functions of the highest type of employment executive have a wide range, from the interviewing of an applicant to administrative decisions involving the largest social problems. For our purpose I classify them as follows:

1. Those functions pertaining directly to the technical productive efficiency of the individual employee. Illustrative of these are: the selection of the right kind of employee for any of the classified "jobs" of the business; the analysis and classification of the "jobs" making up the business; the training of employees within

the plant or in coöperation with educational institutions; the establishment of records, involving the determination of what they shall contain; the routing or transfer or interchange of employees; the discipline of employees; the determination of and maintenance of proper working conditions; the establishment of wage rates which create "incentive," etc. The performance of these functions is accomplished, in some instances, through personal contact of the employment executive with the individual employee, but on the whole through an organized machinery of minor executives, and there is involved, therefore, the function of organizing and operating such machinery.

2. Those functions pertaining indirectly to the productive efficiency of the individual employee or pertaining to the rights of the employee as an economic, even though not a legal, partner in the business. Illustrative of these are: consultations, made possible by confidence, and on the initiative of the employee, concerning the personal problems of the employee; the maintenance of hospitals, nurses, physicians, dentists, etc.; the maintenance of lunch rooms, rest rooms, recreation grounds and equipment, etc.; inspiration and assistance in the organization of an employees' coöperative association for various mutual benefit activities, such as the establishment of a coöperative store, a coöperative bank, etc. The performance of these functions is accomplished, in some instances, through personal contact with the individual, but usually through contact with officers and committees of the employees' organizations.

3. Those functions pertaining to the largest administrative policies and problems of the business. The best type of employment executive is of as high rank as the works, sales, and financial executives, has as complete and independent access to the office of the president, and has as fully his confidence with regard to problems of the relation between the management and the personnel as they have with regard to the problems pertinent to their respective functions. If there is an executive board made up of the various functional managers, he is the peer of any man on that board. On that board he sits in a dual capacity: he represents on the one hand, the desires and the rights of the working force, and on the other hand, the desires and the rights of the management. He is harmonizer and adjuster. He is the specialist who studies the

problems of industrial democracy, organized labor, collective bargaining, employees' consent, and so on, and reports his investigations and conclusions, with recommendations, to that board. The performance of these functions brings him into contact with leaders of the working people, with students of social affairs, and with the highest executives in the management.

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE EMPLOYMENT EXECUTIVE

The necessary qualifications of this high but perfectly practicable type of employment executive are determined by the functions which I have enumerated. The functions are wide in range, and the abilities necessary for their successful performance are equally so. The big employment manager must be able on the one hand, to meet on equal terms of understanding and sympathy the humblest working boy or girl; he must be able on the other hand, by weight of knowledge, of logic, and of personal force, to convince the hard-headed manager or president of the desirability of fundamental and sometimes radical changes in administrative policy. The evolution of the business conscience lags behind that of the social conscience, especially with respect to the human problem, and now and then nothing short of radical change in the business conscience is able to bring it into alignment with the social conscience. I suggest the following classification of the essential qualifications of the employment executive who is strong in every phase of his work.

1. *Personality.* He must be courteous and even tempered, and never "grouchy"; he must be sympathetic with the circumstances and ideas and prejudices of working people; he must never depart from fairness and justice; he must be intuitive, for he must sense facts which are not told to him; he must be able to read human nature and judge character; he must be quick and sure in his decisions; he must be firm, of the motor type, for he is an executive, and out of motor characteristics arises executive energy.

2. *Mental Characteristics.* He must be able to search for and ascertain facts pertaining to his problems, give them proper relative valuation, and make sound conclusions. For years he will be pioneer in a field which has been but little investigated and the principles of which have not been formulated. He must be able, with respect to one problem, to pursue the methods of the inductive

scientist, and, with respect to the next problem, those of the scientist who reasons deductively. He must have a capacity for the analysis and subsequent classification of facts, for in such capacity does organizing ability have its roots. And to perform his highest functions, he must have constructive imagination, be an independent and original source of ideas, see things which are desirable and possible in the light of present tendencies, but in proof of which all the necessary data are not yet available. It is possession of constructive imagination which makes the great administrator.

3. *Information and Experience*, and a knowledge of pertinent facts derived from contact with people and situations and records. As an employer of working people he must be informed concerning the sources of supply; the various types of public and private educational institutions—general and specialized—vocational guidance agencies, employment agencies, and the degree of efficiency with which each accomplishes its aims. As the organizer of a training school within his plant, he must have judgment based on knowledge of facts concerning educational policies and methods, and concerning instruction in specific subjects. In his contact with working people, foremen, superintendents, and higher executives, he must have possession of that mass of facts which we sum up in the expression, “a knowledge of human nature.” He must be informed in the science of psychology and concerning the possibilities of, and limitations to, the utilization of the psychological laboratory in selecting and classifying employees. To enable him to analyze into their elements the processes of his business and to classify them into well defined “jobs,” he must have an accurate knowledge of the details of the technical processes of his business. As an organizer of men and equipment he must be well informed concerning the principles of efficient organization and management. As an administrator, inspiring the highest executive officers towards a wise policy of human relationships, he must be master of the history of the facts and ideas of industrial relationships.

These abilities demanded of the best type of employment executive—abilities of personality, intellect and knowledge—present a combination which is extraordinary. I may be accused of picturing an ideal employment executive. That I admit, for the educator who aspires to train a young man to be anything less is unworthy of his responsibilities. I may be accused of picturing

an impossible paragon. That I deny. I will admit that the employment managers whom I know to be strong in all or nearly all of these qualities can be counted on less than the fingers of one hand, but I know many executives who possess part of these qualifications to the highest degree, and each is possessed to the highest degree somewhere by someone. This analysis of functions and qualifications did not originate at my desk. At my desk I have simply classified the aggregate of functions and qualifications I have seen in many places. Training for the employment executive function should aim to develop each student with respect to each of these qualifications to the highest degree possible, in accordance with his capacity for development. Considering the various degrees of each of these qualifications which men may possess, their permutations and combinations are infinite, and consequently we shall develop in experience an infinite variety of executives. The greatest employment managers will be those who possess all of these abilities, each of the highest degree. Such men can be attracted into executive work of this kind if directors and presidents will value the function highly enough, and will offer the necessary attracting force of rank and remuneration. It is men of this highest type that education should prepare to train. Not all of those they train will achieve the highest rank, for there are human limitations to the selection of men for training, and there are unforeseen varieties of reaction of men to training. But some employment executives of genius, and many of great talent, can be produced, and a high general average of quality of product can be maintained.

### THE TRAINING

It is perfectly obvious that, considering the type of employment executive we aspire to develop, the machinery of training cannot consist merely of one or two courses of three hours each for one semester, entitled *The Functions of Employment Management*, or *The Problems of Employment Management*. The machinery of training must consist of the entire educational machinery, supplemented by such educational assistance as can be afforded by business firms, employment executives' associations and vocation bureaus. We must conceive of training as afforded, not by one or two specialized courses, but by the aggregate of courses and processes of an integrated educational industry. The one or

two specialized courses serve merely to give the final bit of specialized information, to coördinate and relate to the objective the larger amount of information acquired in other courses and in experience, and to effect a final comprehension of the specific problems of the employment management function. The instructor in these specialized courses is like the assembler in the typewriter or cash register plant, who brings together into a whole, suitable for a particular service, numerous parts which have been through many preparatory, selective and fashioning processes. Behind the assembling of the parts of the cash register is the stamping, the turning, the casting of parts; behind that the selection of the raw stock and the specifications of the metallurgist; behind that the work of the bessemer or open hearth or crucible plant; behind that the blast furnace and the selection of magnetite or hematite ores, or a scientifically determined mixture of both; and interwoven throughout the entire series of processes, the analysis of the metallurgist, the rejection of defective, and the selection of suitable materials. Likewise with respect to the machinery for training the best type of specialized executive; back of the one or two specialized professional courses is a series of selecting, preparing and conditioning courses and experiences. The specialized employment management courses—finishing processes—should have a definite relation to the entire preceding series of educational processes.

Let us turn for a moment to the classification of requirements for successful employment managership.

1. *Personal Characteristics.* These are inborn—not made by educational processes. An educational process may discover for an individual that which he has but does not know he has, or it may take that which he has and give it opportunity for exercise and development. But it cannot make a motor temperament of a sensory temperament, and *vice versa*. Therefore our system of training must involve at an early stage and at later stages mechanism for selecting and rejecting, or at least labeling, candidates for the training. This selecting or guidance mechanism must be located, part at the educational institution, part at a highly developed vocational guidance bureau, and part at a coöperating business plant. An essential part of the system of training is the analysis



and selection of material possessing the right temperamental characteristics.

2. *Mental Characteristics.* The development of abilities to observe, to relate and to value facts, to analyze and to classify, to think logically and to form sound judgments, is the particular objective of the educational processes. These abilities are, however, the result of a gradual building-up process. It takes time. It is determined by the nature of the human mind and is as deliberate as the growth of a tree. Therefore, with respect to the development of these abilities in our selected material, we must not think in terms of one year, or one course, or one stratum of our educational system. These abilities in our material are developed throughout the primary school, the secondary school, and the college, by influences in the classroom and without the classroom, cumulative in their effect with respect to mental development. They are developed by discipline in a great variety of subjects. Furthermore, while the educational system is our great instrument for developing these mental abilities, we should not fail to realize that supplementary business experience can offer much in support of the processes of the school and college, and we should enlist business firms in our work.

3. *Information.* Those parts of the system of training necessary to give the prospective employment executive the necessary equipment of information are four.

(a) The series of educational processes of the primary school, the secondary school, and the college, cumulative in their effect with respect to the imparting of information. I am not thinking merely of the three R's and similar fundamental information, but of the more complex information acquired in the study of such subjects as history, political science, sociology, theoretical and applied economics, philosophy and psychology. All such information becomes of practical use in forming judgments, to the employment executive as I have defined his functions.

(b) A group of specialized courses in business administration, of a general nature, concerned with all phases and functions of business, and not specialized with respect to the employment executive function. The employment executive does not perform an unrelated function; he must form judgments concerning the relations of his operations to other functions, of the influence of his

recommendations on other department policies. He must have accurate knowledge of business functions other than his own. At meetings of the executive board his recommendations will carry weight in proportion to the confidence he has created in other executives' minds by repeated evidence of his understanding of their duties and problems.

(c) One or two highly specialized courses, relating specifically to the functions and problems of the employment executive, imparting information about the organization and operations of employment departments in business today, analyzing and discussing their problems, and gathering up all information acquired in more general courses of the entire educational system, and reinterpreting it with respect to the new and particular point of view. All preliminary courses have served to fashion the arrow and prepare the necessary parts; these particular courses attach the feather and sharpen the point.

(d) In connection with the work of the university and of the university school of business administration, there must be organized relationship for apprenticeship opportunities with the employment department of business firms. I emphasize the word *organized*. The course of supplementary instruction in the plant must be as carefully worked out and as complete as is that in the university. The student must be taken through every phase of the department's work, and must have an experience among the working people. This supplementary apprenticeship experience will give information not to be secured in the classroom, will give information about the workability of principles formulated in the classroom, and will give a new meaning to all information acquired in the university.

The individual thus trained for employment executive work, will not be a complete and experienced employment manager, ready to assume full responsibility, but he will be high grade material, ready for final training in actual service under an experienced manager.

In conclusion I wish to make my arguments complete by describing as a concrete example the course of training for the employment executive function as worked out by the Tuck School.

Imagine an educational pyramid built up of a number of strata of educational processes.

1. The first, or base stratum, consists of the primary school; and

2. The second stratum consists of the secondary school.

The function of these schools is character and mind development and the imparting of basic information. Their organization and methods are outside the range of influence of the Tuck School.

3. The third stratum is the freshman, sophomore and junior years of the college, considered *en bloc*. The function of its process is character and mind development of a higher order, and the imparting of information of a more complex nature. The Tuck School, through its entrance requirements, has two distinct influences on the student and his educational development at this stage: it prescribes certain courses of preparation, such as economics, political science and sociology: and it puts in operation a selecting machinery by the requirement for admission of a high quality of work during those years.

4. The fourth stratum is the first year of the Tuck School, equivalent to the senior year of the college. In this year all students take the same block of prescribed courses, which introduce them to the basic facts and principles of every phase of business and give them, in the method by which they are required to work, a taste of the discipline of business service. There is at this stage no specialization within the field of business.

5. The fifth stratum is the second year, or graduate year, of the Tuck School. The greater part of the instruction of this year represents more intensive study of all functions of business, and is received by all students irrespective of their respective lines of specialization. In addition, there is given opportunity for moderate specialization, which, in the case of future employment managers, is in the general subject of organization, administration and management.

6. The sixth stratum, or apex of the pyramid, is represented by a special course in employment management, and by a thesis which is the solution of a specific problem of management in a specific plant. This course comprises an intensive study of the problems of management relating to the employment and supervision of personnel, the control of working conditions, and the relation between employer and employee. Among other things

are considered the sources of supply of employees—public, trade, and commercial schools, vocation bureaus, employment agencies, etc.; classes of employees with reference to their physical, mental and temperamental qualifications for different kinds of work; classes of work with reference to their demands upon employees; methods of hiring; general supervision; training during employment; promotion and transfer; records; discharge; control of working conditions—safety, health, recreation; employees' coöperative associations; wage systems; *esprit* and good will; qualifications and functions of the employment manager; associations of employment managers.

Because the course of training is new and is being offered this year for the first time, I cannot describe any general arrangement with business firms for supplementary apprenticeship work. We cross our bridges as we come to them. Adequate provision has been made for the men now specializing in this course, and the cordial attitude of many business men towards the course when announced assures us that apprenticeship arrangements can be made for each individual student whom our selective judgment permits to specialize in this course.

You will have observed that Tuck School training for any particular service does not consist merely of one or two specialized courses, but consists of the entire series of educational processes influenced to meet our ends. The specialized courses are but the capstone of the pyramid of training. You will have observed also that the sequence is from the general to the particular, from the liberalizing to the specialized and professional.